

REQUEST FOR INITIAL GRANT PROPOSALS (RFIP)
Regional Networks for Smart Growth

OVERVIEW INFORMATION

FEDERAL AGENCY NAME: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation; Development, Community and Environment Division (DCED).

FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TITLE: Regional Networks for Smart Growth, Request for Initial Proposals (RFIP).

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: This is an initial announcement of a funding opportunity.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: SGNET-04

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER: 66.611, Environmental Policy and Innovation Grants, authorized under Delegation of Authority I-47.

DATES: Initial proposals must be submitted to U.S. EPA by 5 PM East Coast time, on Monday, August 30, 2004. Award announcements are expected to be made in or around January 2005.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Development, Community, and Environment Division in U.S. EPA's Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation is soliciting initial proposals for Regional Networks for Smart Growth (SGNET-04, CFDA 66.611, "Environmental Policy and Innovation Grants," Delegation of Authority I-47). This is an initial announcement of a funding opportunity. EPA is seeking proposals for creating or expanding three or more regional networks of diverse groups, including developer interests, environmental groups, business groups, citizen activist groups, public agencies, and other stakeholders, that work together to research, identify, and support smart growth projects and public policies. The networks should educate the public and private sectors and citizenry about the benefits of smart growth. Networks may not use EPA funds to lobby or to advocate for or against specific development projects. Initial proposals must be submitted to EPA by 5 PM East Coast time on Monday, August 30, 2004. Award announcements are expected to be made in January 2005.

EPA expects to award one assistance agreement under this solicitation and expects to have approximately \$25,000 available for first-year funding with a ceiling of \$400,000 for the life of the agreement. Final agreements may be negotiated for a five-year budget and project period, with future funding dependent on the availability of funds, agency priorities, and applicant performance. The award will be in the form of a cooperative agreement, which entails extensive involvement by U.S. EPA. This may include EPA review and approval of project phases, participation in and collaboration on various phases of the work, approval of the substantive terms of contracts, and approval of all draft and final products. Eligible applicants include incorporated nonprofit organizations incorporated or domiciled in the U.S.; U.S.-based public agencies, institutions, and organizations; and individuals. Cost-sharing is encouraged but not required. Only one application per applicant is permitted. EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards.

FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

Section 1: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

The national Smart Growth Network is a partnership of over 35 nonprofit and governmental organizations, including environmental groups, professional associations, real estate organizations, historic preservation advocates, transportation groups, affordable housing groups, local government, and state and federal

agencies. Network partners agree on smart growth principles, support each other in various smart growth activities, and bring their various constituencies together in cooperative endeavors. The Smart Growth Network Web site (www.smartgrowth.org) provides in-depth information and resources on smart growth issues and partners' activities.

More networks like these are needed at the regional level to promote development that creates better solutions for the economy, the environment, public health, and communities. Smart growth is not a one-size-fits-all solution; its principles must be adapted to fit the unique conditions in each area. Regional networks, comprised of local organizations, are well suited to guide smart growth development to best meet an area's needs.

A Regional Network for Smart Growth is a partnership of diverse groups, including developer interests, environmental groups, business groups, citizen activist groups, public agencies, and other stakeholders, that work together at the regional level to research, identify, and support smart growth projects and public policies. The network educates the public and private sectors and the citizenry about the benefits of smart growth.

For example, in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, a successful Smart Growth Alliance (washington.uli.org/sga) has been functioning for several years. The alliance members, representing business, private development, environmental, and citizen interests, work together to encourage smart growth development around the region. The alliance's Smart Growth Recognition program recognizes residential, commercial, and mixed-use private development proposals that exemplify smart growth characteristics. It offers a sort of "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval" to proposals that meet its standards for smart growth projects. The alliance will testify at public hearings that a proposal meets its smart growth criteria, which can improve the project's chance of being approved. This "seal of approval" from environmental, citizen, and business interests can reassure local government officials and citizens who may not be familiar with smart growth, but who want development that enhances the region's economy, environment, health, and communities. Other examples of regional networks for smart growth include the Housing Action Coalition in Santa Clara County, California (www.svmg.org/Committees/Housing/Housing_Action_Coalition), and the Vermont Smart Growth Collaborative (www.vtsprawl.org/Initiatives/sgcollaborative/VSGC_main.htm).

This funding opportunity will provide seed money to start regional networks for smart growth and/or expand the activities of existing networks in three or more regions. Funded projects must consist of two phases:

Phase 1: during the first year of the agreement, the applicant must explore possibilities for regional networks in several different regions. The deliverables from this phase will be comprehensive plans to implement each of the three or more regional networks. Applicants will be expected to defend their choices of regions and to justify why the other regions on their initial list were dropped from consideration. The plan for each network developed by the end of Phase 1 will require signed commitment letters from the other network partners, along with the criteria for choosing those partners.

Phase 2: during the subsequent years of the assistance agreement, assuming funding is available, the applicant will create or expand these networks.

At a minimum, proposals must include the following core elements and must specify content and approach for each element. Proposals that do not address each of these core elements will not be considered.

1. Applicants must commit to creating or supporting networks in three or more separate regions over the life of the agreement. By the end of Phase 1, applicants will be expected to have identified these regions and to have necessary groundwork in place, such as signed commitment letters from groups that will be

involved and a preliminary plan for the network's activities. Proposals must specify how applicants will meet these requirements.

2. Applicants must list the regions in which they will investigate the potential for establishing or augmenting regional networks, define the region in which each network will operate, and indicate why the region is defined the way it is (e.g., it follows the boundaries of a metropolitan planning region, it is geographically constrained, etc.). Targeted areas must be at least the size of a metropolitan region and no larger than statewide.

3. Applicants must describe the market conditions for development, especially smart growth, in each targeted region. Networks cannot be formed in response to a single development project; they must be ongoing efforts to promote smart growth. Networks can be valuable in various market conditions: high-growth regions with a great deal of development pressure, but also areas with little or no development, struggling to attract high-quality, smart growth projects. Applicants must explain how a regional network for smart growth will help the targeted regions.

4. Applicants must note which other smart growth/development networks, if any, exist in the targeted regions. If the proposal includes supporting one or more existing smart growth networks, applicants must describe the network's activities, plans, and partners and must include a letter of support from whatever organization is authorized to make commitments on behalf of each network. These letters must specify what role each network plans to play in the proposed project and whether the networks will provide in-kind services or other matching funds.

5. Applicants must identify potential partners in each region and note the criteria for selection. Networks will be expected to represent a comprehensive, inclusive range of stakeholders and include roughly equal representation from development and building interests and environmental and citizens' groups. Applicants must indicate how their approach will achieve this goal. Many of the national Smart Growth Network partners have state and/or local affiliates that might be willing to join a regional network for smart growth, for example, the American Farmland Trust, the American Institute of Architects, the American Planning Association, the International City/County Management Association, the National Association of Counties, the National Association of Realtors, and the Urban Land Institute. The regional networks may also include groups that are unique to that locality and/or local affiliates of other national groups that are not partners in the Smart Growth Network, for example, a local homebuilders' group, a chamber of commerce, public health professionals, neighborhood associations, citizen activist groups, or the local chapter of a national environmental group.

6. Applicants must describe plans for funding the networks, including any matching funds during the term of the EPA assistance agreement and plans to sustain the networks after federal funding ends.

7. Applicants must describe activities that the networks will undertake with EPA funding over the life of the assistance agreement, including, but not limited to, regional meetings or forums, travel, publications, certification or awards programs, and other educational and partnership-building activities. Networks may not use EPA funds to lobby or to advocate for or against specific development projects, although they can testify to local government bodies that a specific project meets their smart growth criteria. The proposals must also include ideas for disseminating the lessons learned in creating and operating the networks, whether by creating a guide for local and regional organizations to use in setting up networks, establishing a team of experts who would be available for consultation, or other means. Proposals must state which activities will occur under Phase 1 (the first year of funding) and which will occur in subsequent years.

8. Applicants must describe specific goals for the regional networks. These may be general goals, such as promoting smart growth development in the region, or region-specific goals.

The Development, Community and Environment Division (DCED) in U.S. EPA's Office of Policy Economics and Innovation is issuing this request for initial proposals (RFIP). DCED focuses on smart growth issues of regional and national significance. Smart growth development practices support national environmental and public health goals by protecting sensitive watersheds, minimizing water quality impacts from development, reducing air emissions by increasing transportation choices, and encouraging cleanup and sustainable redevelopment of brownfields.

Successful applicants must demonstrate expertise in smart growth and experience working collaboratively to find common ground on growth and development issues. Smart growth is development that serves the economy, the community, public health, and the environment. It is often characterized by a common set of development principles:

- mix land uses;
- take advantage of compact building design;
- create a range of housing opportunities and choices;
- create walkable neighborhoods;
- foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place;
- preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas;
- strengthen and direct development towards existing communities;
- provide a variety of transportation choices;
- make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective;
- encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

Section 2: AWARD INFORMATION

U.S. EPA expects to have approximately \$25,000 available for first-year activities for proposals under this funding cycle. This is subject to availability of funding within the agency's FY 04 budget. EPA expects to award one assistance agreement under this solicitation. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit proposals for first-year activities for approximately \$25,000 or less. Final grants may be negotiated for budget and project periods of up to five years, with funding for future years dependent on funding availability, agency priorities and applicant performance. A ceiling of approximately \$400,000 for a five-year agreement is suggested.

The expected time span for any cooperative agreements awarded under this RFIP (i.e., the project and budget period) will be from January 2005 through January 2010. EPA plans to use FY 04 funds to support the first assistance agreement awarded under this solicitation; funding may not occur until early FY 05 (FY 05 begins October 1, 2004, and runs through September 30, 2005). EPA reserves the discretion to select additional awardees from this solicitation for possible funding in the second or third quarter of FY 05 (i.e., January 2005 to June 2005).

Applicants must provide detailed descriptions of the activities proposed for the first year under this competition, as well as a description of what follow-up activities would be conducted in subsequent years if additional funding is made available. The assistance agreement awards will be in the form of cooperative agreements which will include substantive involvement on the part of U.S. EPA. This may include EPA review and approval of project phases, participation in and collaboration on various phases of the work, approval of the substantive terms of contracts, and approval of all draft and final projects.

Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are eligible to compete with applications for new awards.

Section 3: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Section 3.1: ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include (1) incorporated nonprofit (or not-for-profit) agencies, institutions, and organizations incorporated or domiciled in the United States; (2) public (tribal, state, county, regional or local) agencies, institutions, and organizations; and (3) individuals. Applicants must be located in, and project activities must be conducted within, the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or a territory or possession of the United States. Nonprofit organizations described in section 501 (c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. Please see Section 4.5 for information on eligible activities and costs.

Section 3.2. COST-SHARING OR MATCHING

There are no match or cost-sharing requirements. However, the degree to which the project budget effectively uses EPA funds and leverages matching funds both will be considered as evaluation criteria. Matching funds can include cash or in-kind contributions. Any dollars counted towards match must be for costs that U.S. EPA can fund. Allowable costs for nonprofit organizations are defined in OMB circular A-122; allowable costs for public entities are defined in OMB circular A-87.

Section 3.3: OTHER

Only one application per applicant will be accepted. To be eligible, applicants must meet all of the following threshold criteria. Threshold criteria will be applied on a pass/fail basis. Failure to meet any of them will render an application ineligible; ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

Threshold Criterion 1: Smart Growth Focus

The proposal must focus on the issues, subjects, and activities targeted by this RFIP and explained under the section entitled "Funding Opportunity Description." The proposal must embody, result in, or encourage smart growth. The proposal must clearly demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the smart growth issues addressed by the project. Applicants must clearly demonstrate expertise in smart growth issues and commitment to smart growth. U.S. EPA will use the smart growth definition outlined in Section 1 ("Funding Opportunity Description") to apply this criterion.

Threshold Criterion 2: Allowable Activities

The proposal must consist of activities authorized under one or more of the following U.S. EPA grant authorities: Clean Air Act section 103 (b) (3); Clean Water Act section 104 (b) (3); Solid Waste Disposal Act section 8001, as amended; Toxic Substances Control Act section 10; Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act section 20, as supplemented by P.L. 106-74; and Safe Drinking Water Act sections 1442 (a) and (c). Most of these statutes authorize grants for research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies. The project activities must advance the state of knowledge or transfer information. The term "demonstrations" can encompass the first instance of a pollution control or prevention technique, or an innovative application of a previously used method. The term "research" may include the application of established practices when they contribute to learning about an environmental concept or problem.

Threshold Criterion 3: Environmental Focus

The project's general focus must be one that is specified in the statutes listed above under threshold criterion 2. For most statutes the project must address the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of air, water, or solid/hazardous waste pollution. In the case of grants under the Toxic Substances Control Act or the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, the project must "(carry) out the purposes of the Act." The overarching focus must be on the statutory purpose of the applicable grant authorities, which in most cases is "to prevent or control pollution." In light of this, proposals relating to topics which are sometimes included within the term "environment" such as recreation, conservation, restoration, or habitat

protection must describe the relationship of these topics to the statutorily required purpose of pollution prevention and/or control.

Threshold Criterion 4: Serve a Public Purpose

This award will be an assistance agreement, not a contract. Proposals must clearly demonstrate how the proposed activities will be of primary benefit to the applicant organization and the public at large. Proposals must clearly demonstrate how the proposed activities directly support the applicant organization's overall mission and long-term goals.

Threshold Criterion 5: Complete Applications That Are Submitted on Time

To be eligible, applications must comply with the mandatory provisions of Sections 4.2 and 4.3.

Section 4: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Section 4.1: HOW TO GET APPLICATION MATERIALS

This announcement provides all of the instructions needed for preparing an initial proposal. While there are no required application forms or kits, there are format and content requirements which are described below under Section 4.2, "Content and Form of Application Submission." Paper copies of this announcement can be obtained by contacting the EPA personnel listed in Section 7. Electronic copies will be available on the DCED web site (www.epa.gov/smartgrowth).

Section 4.2: CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

To be considered complete and eligible for review, all proposals must include a cover letter, summary information page, project description, budget and budget narrative, documentation of qualifications, and (if applicable) confirmation of partner participation and matching funds. There is a 20-page limit (i.e., 20 page sides) for the project description. Applicants are encouraged to include attachments that help demonstrate their expertise (e.g., sample newsletters, smart growth publications, or articles). These attachments will be used to help evaluate the proposal against the selection criteria described in Section 5. The following format is required for all proposals:

Cover letter (does not count against page limit)

The cover letter that accompanies your proposal must be signed by an official with the authority to commit your organization to the project and should be written on your organization's official letterhead.

Summary information page (does not count against page limit)

The summary information page should be one page long and include the following information:

- the title and number of this RFIP (Regional Networks for Smart Growth, SGNET-04)
- project title and location
- applicant name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address
- name and title of project contact (including how to reach if different from above)
- type of applicant organization (e.g., nonprofit, local government, state government, etc.)
- summary budget information (amount requested from U.S. EPA; amount and source of any matching funds)
- 5 to 10 line abstract of the proposal

Project description (no longer than 20 page sides)

The project description must provide a concise overview of the project and should include a preliminary workplan outlining all major tasks, products, and timetables. The narrative must address how the applicant will approach each of the core elements of the program (see Section 1). The narrative must also address how the proposal meets each of the threshold and selection criteria, and what environmental results the applicant expects. If other project partners or funding sources are involved, their role and contribution must be clearly defined. The project descriptions must use no smaller than 10 point type, should have page margins all around of at least one inch, and should be no longer than 20 page sides. Additional project description pages will not be considered.

Budget and budget narrative (does not count against page limit)

The project budget must include all relevant direct costs (e.g., personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, and contractual). Indirect costs must also be included. If not self-evident, entries under each category should be explained in the budget itself or in the project description.

Documentation of qualifications (does not count against page limit)

The applicant must include short profiles of all principal staff who will have a major role in the project. Where applicable, this includes principal staff from partner organizations. These profiles must specifically address each individual's experience with smart growth issues and their areas of expertise related to the project.

Confirmation of partner participation and/or match (does not count against page limit)

Applicants who are partnering with other organizations, agencies, or institutions must include a letter from each partner, on partner letterhead, indicating the partner's role in the project. Each partner letter must be signed by an individual with the authority to commit the partner to the project. Letters confirming partner participation must be included in the initial proposal package and will not be accepted separately. Proposals relying on partner participation that are missing documentation of that participation will be considered ineligible. Partnerships must identify which eligible organization (defined in Section 3.1) will be the recipient of the assistance agreement and which eligible organization(s) will be sub-awardees/ sub-grantees of the recipient. Sub-awards/sub-grants must be consistent with the definitions of those terms in 40 CFR 30.2(ff) and 40 CFR 31.3 *Sub-grant*, as applicable. EPA encourages applicants to compete sub-grants; applicants must provide information on the competitive process they will use if they plan to award sub-grants. The recipient must administer the assistance agreement, is accountable to EPA for proper expenditure of the funds, and will be the point of contact for the coalition. Sub-recipients are accountable to the recipient for proper use of EPA funding.

Applicants may not use EPA funding to make sub-grants/sub-awards to for-profit organizations or consultants but may procure goods or services from such entities by contract. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance (whether awarded to a for-profit or nonprofit organization) must be awarded under the competitive procurement provisions of 40 CFR part 30 or 40 CFR part 31, as applicable.

Additional information regarding how applications should be submitted and what will happen following selection

Applicants must submit one original and four copies of their full proposal (if attachments are provided, this includes five copies of all attachments – originals of these are not required). E-mail and fax submissions will not be accepted. Following selection, successful applicants will be required to submit a formal request for funding assistance (i.e., federal form SF 424 and associated documentation) and a detailed workplan. These items should not be provided with the initial proposal. Applicants should be aware that there may be a two- to four-week turnaround required if they are asked to submit a formal request for funding assistance.

Section 4.3: SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

U.S. EPA must receive proposals by 5 PM East Coast time on August 30, 2004. No late proposals will be accepted. No fax or e-mail submissions will be accepted. Postmarks or meter stamps will not be considered sufficient documentation of on-time delivery.

Section 4.4: INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

All applicants should be aware that formal requests for assistance (i.e., SF 424 and associated documentation) may be subject to intergovernmental review under Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Applicants should contact their state's single point of contact (SPOC) for further information. There is a list of these contacts at the following web site: <http://whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>.

Section 4.5: FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Funding is only available for the activities authorized under one or more of the U.S. EPA grant authorities cited in Section 3.3, threshold criteria 2 and 3. Funding will not be permitted for construction activity, lobbying, entertainment expenses, or other unallowable costs. Pre-award costs and equipment costs are allowable only with written consent from EPA. Allowable costs for nonprofit organizations are defined in OMB circular A-122; allowable costs for public entities are defined in OMB circular A-87. All procurement actions conducted by recipients (e.g., contracting out part of the work under the assistance agreement) should be conducted in a manner that provides open and free competition to the maximum extent practical. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement provisions of 40 CFR part 30 or 40 CFR part 31, as applicable. Sub-awards/sub-grants must be consistent with the definitions of those terms in 40 CFR 30.2 (ff) and 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA encourages applicants to compete sub-grants (see Section 4.2, "Confirmation of partner participation," for further details).

Section 4.6. OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must submit one original and four copies of their full proposal. The full proposal includes the cover letter, summary information page, project description, budget, documentation of qualifications, documentation of partner participation/match (if applicable), and supporting attachments (if applicable). If supporting attachments are submitted, they must be submitted in the same package with the full proposal, and five copies of the attachments should be included (there is no requirement for original attachments). All applications must be submitted in paper copy in accordance with the requirements stated above. No fax or e-mail submissions will be accepted. As mentioned in Section 4.2, postmarks or meters will not be considered sufficient documentation of on-time delivery. Only one application per applicant is permitted.

The delivery address for submitting your proposal will vary depending on whether you are mailing your proposal or arranging for hand delivery. If you are sending your proposal via hand delivery (e.g., UPS, Federal Express, courier, or some other means), send it to:

Megan Susman
U.S. EPA
Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation
Development, Community and Environment Division
1301 Constitution Avenue NW
Room 1416 L
Washington, DC 20004

If you are mailing your proposal, send it to:

Megan Susman

U.S. EPA Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation
Development, Community and Environment Division
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, mail code 1807 T
Washington, DC 20460

Please note that there may be substantial delays in conventional mail service to U.S. EPA due to heightened security screening.

Section 5: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

5.1: SELECTION CRITERIA

If the proposal meets the threshold criteria articulated in Section 3.3 above, it will then be evaluated against the following selection criteria:

1. Degree to which applicant demonstrates success and expertise convening partnerships with groups representing varied stakeholders, including development, environmental, and citizens' interest (weighted by a factor of 2)
2. Degree to which applicant demonstrates expertise in smart growth and in developing smart growth informational materials
3. Potential impact of the project on development patterns and economic development and likelihood of success (weighted by a factor of 2)
4. Degree to which the proposing organization is an appropriate representative for the issues dealt with in the assistance agreement, is likely to be viewed as an authority on the subject, or is partnering with organizations that meet these requirements
5. Degree to which project effectively uses EPA funds
6. Degree to which project effectively leverages matching funds and/or will be self-sustaining after federal funding ends
7. Degree to which the project approach is replicable, serves as a learning tool, and will be disseminated to appropriate audiences
8. Effectiveness of approach to ensure adequate diversity and balance of networks created or supported through the project
9. Programmatic capability (refers to the administrative and management capabilities of an organization. In evaluating programmatic capability, EPA will consider the qualifications of key personnel, the quality of proposed competitive processes for selection of contractors and sub-grantees, and the applicant's past performance administering projects funded by EPA or other federal agencies. Applicants must discuss their performance history [including adverse audit or grant administration findings for the five years preceding application] in their proposals and provide contacts for EPA to obtain additional information. If applicants have not received federal funding before, they should provide other information that would help demonstrate their organization's capability to successfully manage grant funds. This might include but is not limited to administration of programs funded through state grants or foundations.)
10. Overall quality and comprehensiveness of approach to supporting existing or building new networks (weighted by a factor of 2)

Proposals will be scored high, medium, or low against each of the evaluation factors using a numerical scale of 1 through 5, with 1 being low and 5 being high. Selection criteria 1, 3, and 10 are weighted by a factor of 2.

5.2. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

EPA will evaluate each of the selection criteria above based on information provided in the proposal and any relevant attachments. In addition to the factors above, EPA may also consider such factors as geographic diversity and applicant diversity (i.e., type of organization).

5.3. ANTICIPATED ANNOUNCEMENT AND AWARD DATES

See Section 6.1

Section 6: AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

6.1: AWARD NOTICES

Successful applicants will receive an official notice of award from EPA's grants management office.

EPA will announce successful recipients on the U.S. EPA smart growth web site (www.epa.gov/smartgrowth). This information will be posted within 30 days after U.S. EPA's Grants Administration Division issues a written offer of award to the recipient. U.S. EPA anticipates that awards will be announced in early 2005.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified via mail or e-mail in late 2004. Applicants who do not pass threshold screening will be notified in the fall of 2004 before final award decisions are made.

Applicants should be aware that they are not authorized to begin performance on a project until they have received their official award document; pre-award costs are undertaken at the recipient's risk.

6.2: ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must comply with the standard requirements, terms and conditions of EPA assistance agreements. Funded activities must be allowable under EPA statutory authority (see Section 3). All recipients must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number on their formal SF424 applications. A DUNS number can be obtained by calling 1-866-705-5711. A DUNS number is not required for initial proposals.

6.3: REPORTING

Recipients will be required to submit quarterly progress reports and will have to participate in annual reviews of their projects with their U.S. EPA project officer. A project officer will be designated at the time of the award of the cooperative agreement; that project officer will work in partnership with the recipient.

Section 7: AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have questions about this solicitation, please contact:

Megan Susman
U.S. EPA Development Community and Environment Division

Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Mail code 1807 T
Washington, D.C. 20004
phone: 202-566-2861
susman.megan@epa.gov

Answers to frequently asked questions will be posted on the U.S. EPA smart growth web site (www.epa.gov/smartgrowth). The only pre-application assistance available under this competition will be related to clarifying the requirements of the RFIP.

Section 8: OTHER INFORMATION

Both initial proposals and formal requests for funding are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. This means that anyone can request, and receive, copies of them. Applicants should clearly mark information they consider confidential. U.S. EPA will make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with agency regulations (40 CFR part 2, subpart B).

Any disputes regarding funding decisions will be resolved in accordance with 40 CFR part 30 or 31, depending on the applicant. U.S. EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards.